DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 100 340 IR 001 435

AUTHOR	Waters, Richard L.
TITLE	Interface with Local Information Agencies. A Community Information Network.
INSTITUTION	Dallas Public Library, Tex.
PUB DATE	Oct 74
NOTE	27p.; Paper presented at the Biennial Conference of the Southwestern Library Association (25th, Galveston, Texas, October 1974)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$1.85 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	*City Wide Programs; Community Agencies (Public); *Community Information Services; Community Organizations; Community Relations; Community Resources; *Community Service Programs; Community Services; Conferences; Daily Living Skills; Information Needs; *Information Services; Information Sources; *Interagency Cooperation; Interinstitutional Cooperation; Library Cooperation; *Library Services; Speeches
IDENTIFIERS	Southwestern Library Association

ABSTRACT

The role of the library to collect, catalog, and dispense information has a new application in several communities around the country: providing the local citizens with information on governmental and social services vital to life in the community. At least a dozen new community information centers have been established in urban areas with various funding sources and administrative organizations. The future of the public library as one of perhaps several dispensaries of community information is promising, as there is a need for such services and many libraries are ready to meet this need. With sufficient attention given to staff training, staff for these programs may be recruited from the neighborhood. Not every library is suited to this utilization, nor should be. Information on community resources is often not in print, and must be sought out, compiled, and continuously updated. Computers are well suited to this sort of function, and, once out into a computer, these services can be sold. It is recommended that librarians develop methods of cost accounting on the services to aid in future program development. (KC)

ED100340

INTERFACE WITH LOCAL INFORMATION AGENCIES

A Community Information Network

A Paper Presented by:

Richard L. Waters
Associate Director, Public Services
Dallas Public Library

At the 25th Biennial Conference of the
Southwestern Library Association
October 15-18, 1974
Galveston, Texas

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

IR001435

The strength of a library, in my judgement is its ability to collect, catalog, and dispense information. As librarians this is what we are trained to do and this is what we do best.

As we make a headlong dash toward the 21st century we are under increased pressures, from within and without the profession, to expand the scope of the information which we will collect, catalog, perhaps classify, and dispense. We are told, sometimes quite forcefully, that we should not--must not--limit our informational resources to those between the covers of a book. We must get out into the community and find out what are the basic life needs; what is the survival information that people need in order to cope with life today.

Furthermore, we are being told that only "community people" can inform us about these needs - this survival information. It is in these areas where the needs of the people are greatest. Citizens do not really need, at least as a first priority, the latest best selling fiction title, a popular magazine, a story hour - these "things" which we have traditionally and very successfully provided for those persons who have come to our door and sought such service. Rather, we must be in a position to be able to tell a person where they can go for the solution to a family crisis problem; where they can borrow money to start a new business; how they can work through the buracracy of the school district to solve a problem affecting their child; these are the real needs of the people today.

It is my belief that many of these needs should be the concern of libraries. It is also my belief that many of them are being met, in fact have long been met, by forward thinking and progressive libraries. I suggest that considerable community information service work has been and is being performed, but it

has not/is not being adequately reported by the library press. This is probably our fault. But then,perhaps we have been too busy serving people to afford the time of writing a letter to the editor?

Nonetheless, we can and should do more. This paper will explore community information service. It will briefly describe what a few libraries and nonlibrary organizations throughout the country are engaged in. The sampling will illustrate a variety of programs, projects, and services which any or all libraries can implement.

The providing of community informa'ion is not difficult - if there is a committment. I will also suggest that there are some information endeavors or systems which libraries properly cannot, and most assuredly should not, attempt to provide. For to do so would be a mistake, potentially a very dangerous mistake, and would negate from our ability to do that which we can do best; collect, catalog, and dispense information.

The Philadelphia Vocation Information Through Computer Systems Project (VICS) is an automated data base containing information on over 400 occupations. It was designed by the Division of Instructional Systems of the School District of Philadelphia to help students choose careers based on their interests, abilities, and educational goals. The data base is stored on a computer owned by the School District of Philadelphia.

Patrons of the Free Library of Philadelphia have access to VICS by means of three computer terminals which are leased from the School District and are located in the Central Library and two branch libraries. The terminals are rented for $250 each per month. Included in the rental is computer time and the VICS program. The Free Library received an LSCA grant from the Pennsylvania State Library to implement and initially operate this program.

User response to the program in the two branch libraries has not been encouraging. The Free Library does intend to move the terminals to a hoped for better location in the near future. However, at the Central Library use of the terminal has been much better. In the last fiscal year the data base was accessed over 3,800 times The Central Library's terminal contributed the largest portion of that figure.

The Free Library and the School District have had their problems administratively. At times they have pulled in opposite directions. At other times communications have been difficult. Fortunately, however, the basic relationship between the two institutions is sound and it has been a productive one of long standing. They can recognize their mutual interest and they both want the VICS project to succeed. Proof of this is the fact that the library is now signing a new contract with the School District to receive VICS for another year.[1]

Cost information for the Free Library, other than the terminal cost, is not available. This illustrates a weakness of our profession - our reluctance to develop accurate cost figures so that we know the true cost of our services.

The most ambitious community information effort is that of the Brooklyn Public Library. Their Citizens Urban Information Center Program was originally conceived three and one half years ago as a $10 million program to serve all of New York City. Originating in the Office of the Deputy Mayor of greater New York, it was his feeling that libraries could best meet the information needs of the local communities with the greatest integrity.

The CUIC goal is to establish a network of neighborhood based community centers to provide to all residents information about available public and private resources agencies having a responsibility for people services or assistance.

The program is funded under the authority of the Social Security Act with local matching funds provided by Models Cities and the Council on Library Resources. Seventy-five percent of the funds are Social Security Acts monies. Brooklyn has been funded for two years in the amount of $1,970,000 for the first year, and additional $1 million for the second year. The program operates on a contract between the City of New York and Administration and Management Research Association of New York City, Inc. (AMRA). AMRA, the contractor for the project, is a public benefit corporation whose major purpose is to assist the Office of Administration of the City of New York and other agencies of the City...to provide more intensive studies into research causes, nature, and solution of problems of administration and management of particular importance to the government and general welfare of the City. AMRA sub-contracted with the Brooklyn Public Library to provide CUIC service and is responsible for developing the data base on government organization and services. It shares responsibility with the Library for public relations and training. It also provides a central staff for the project. How will it work?

There will be a corp of paraprofessionals recruited and trained to service citizens requests for information on government sources. Two paraprofessionals will be placed on each of the Library's 55 neighborhood agencies. Each person will be a resident of the neighborhood in which they work. This has been a very strictly adherred to requirement of the program. Each agency provides for the program a highly visible location within the building. Space is necessary to accomodate a desk, two chairs, a telephone, filing cabinet, and a section or two of shelving. The paraprofessionals from the communities will be members of the agency staffs and will be under the administrative supervision of the branch librarian. Their responsibility, however, is for the CUIC program on a full time basis.

These community information specialists will receive a salary of $8,900 a year, plus an additional 27% in fringe benefits. They must have public relations, survey, appropriate language, and informational analysis skills. The staff must be objective and non-partisan.

Each local Citizens Urban Information Center will be a one stop, neighborhood center for free public information about all city, state, and federal programs which provide benefits to Brooklyn residents. Information will also be available about health, education, and social services offered by volunteer agencies.

The Brooklyn Public Library and AMRA is now engaged in organizing the program and preparing the information system. Community residents and organizations are assisting with the program design.

The data base must be broad enough to span 2.5 million residents. It must respond to English, Spanish, Yiddish, Italian, and other languages. Not all information in the data base will be input from published sources. It will have to develop its own publishing program because of the amount of important information not now available in print format.

Early next year, the center will open to the public. For New York City, the next step will be to extend the program to all 181 branch libraries in the five boroughs.

Project staff, in addition to the community information specialists and the Project Director, include Directors of Data Base Development, Training, an Accountant, an Office Manager, plus the key administrative officers of the public libraries.[2]

The most widely publicized community information project has been the five city Neighborhood Information Center Project (NIC). Funded by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, five major public libraries,

Atlanta, Cleveland, Detroit, Queens Borough, and Houston, are participating.

The basic objective of NIC is: "To demonstrate to neighborhood residents of the community at-large that the Urban Public Library can be a vital force in daily living, will provide free information, will refer residents to additional sources for information and assistance, and that the library can adapt itself in non-traditional ways to meet the needs of those who have not previously used Public Library services, and have neither experience nor knowledge of the role a public library can play in the daily life of the residents of the community." [3]

Each of the five public libraries planned two centers for project purposes. Each library received $59,000 for the project. $15,000 was for a local research/feasibility study, the balance for the operation of two centers for six months.

Dorothy Turick, until recently National Project Officer and a member of the Cleveland Public Library staff, reported the following after a preliminary evaluation of the project:

1. Privacy is more necessary for many transactions with NIC clients than for most other information services in the libraries.
2. In some cases there was too much bureacratic difference between the project staff and the immediate supervisor. It was recommended that more responsibility be delegated to middle level supervisors who would have more time to oversee the day-to-day operations of the center.
3. Staff drawn from minority groups and with a predominatly social service background work out well with clients--but have problems in communicating with librarians where the latter were excluded from the project. Better staff orientation is needed, and in the interest of future projects librarians should be included in the NIC operations whenever possible.

4. For public relations reasons alone, the central library should be involved. Vitally needed access to the media is seldom available to a project if there is only local (branch/neighborhood) interest.[4]

Local evaluations, in four of the five cities, conclude the following:

In a report published June 30, 1974, the Queens Borough Public Library concluded that the project and the services provided were valuable and should be continued, in fact expanded. Their two pilot centers were located in quite different communities. One was situated in an ethnically mixed, middle class, and upward bound community which had relatively few organizations operating within it, but those there were well structured and stable. The branch was in a newly housed, bright, attractive building located in a major thoroughfare. Library service in the community has been continuious since 1912. High priority in this branch, as far as the NIC was concerned, has been directed to senior citizens activities. 62% of the inquiries were walk-ins - the other 38% telephone queries. From the beginning the residents have primarily sought information relating to supplemental income for retired persons, tax changes, road repair agencies, and the like. Their concern has been for services above and beyond basic life needs.

The other center was located in a poor, largely black, factionalized community where a multitude of federally funded agencies have frequently changed both function and personnel in the last few years. The branch has been located in a rented facility since 1961, on a main street characterized by vacant lots, refuse, boarded up stores, and store front churches. The latter center received approximately 30% of the number of queries processed in the middle income community. However, interest and activity in the latter unit has picked up considerably in 1974. Highest priority of problems and queries

here has been related to employment. The number of telephone and walk-in queries is exactly reversed. Word of mouth recommendations have proven to be the most solid form of publicity.

Queens Borough is now in the process of implementing a third year of the project to run through June 30, 1975. They consider the NIC concept to be a success. By the end of the second year, this past summer, it had become a viable, recognized library service in the two branch libraries. The amount of federal funding for this new year if $40,000. From this sum they will hire one part-time person to service in each of ten communities. They will invest a much larger sum in "regular" staff hours.[5]

The Detroit Public Library considers the NIC project "alive and well" in the Motor City. The Information Place, TIP, was chosen to serve as the slogan and logo for community information services. TIP is now largely institutionalized with most of the staff involved. They are receiving approximately 10,000 requests per month. Since they have incorporated the information and referral service into their daily schedule and work assignments they are unable to determine local costs at this time.[6]

David Henington, Director, Houston Public Library, considers their project successful. As they redefine their priorities they believe that people are beginning to think of the library as more than merely an informational storehouse. It is a place where "regular people" can expect to find answers to real questions.

Henington states that it remains to be seen what effect orientation or re-training of staff will have on the response given to public need. He believes that the NIC project has been very helpful in conveying to their new City administration the impression of the Library's sincere desire to be a full companion in City services. Houston is preparing to expand NIC into all

branch library staff. They plan to hire additional librarians to assist in outreach, referral, and reference work. Going city-wide will result in a change in emphasis for the Library. They will now handle social/welfare referrals. In addition, there will be an increase in consumer related problems, requests for City services, and drug related problems. (They state that this becomes a problem when it effects the middle-class). It means that they will seek staff for outreach, not just in the inner-city, but in suburbia also.

The Houston project, in addition to operating the NIC centers, has also attempted to organize a "Houston Coalition of Information and Referral Agencies." The objective was to exchange information, ideas, reduce duplication, and expand the service potential of all agencies. They Coalition has not been without difficulty. There was a time this year when no one was willing to be nominated for any office. Former officers had been transferred out of agencies, and there was an increasing number of resignations. Paradoxically, while the structure was crumbling, the services provided by the agencies was finding greater acceptance with Houstonians. The Coalition has been turned around and is now on the upbeat. Training is the primary function. They are attempting to understand what makes good referral workers, and how to retain them once they are employed and getting results.[7]

On Lake Erie, the Cleveland Public Library is expanding it's project this year, also partially funded by a one-year $40,000 federal grant. Cleveland will operate centers in 35 branch libraries, an increase of 32. The NICs will cover more than crisis information, as was the case last year.[8]

The Cleveland Public Library served as the "Headquarters" for this national project. As mentioned above, Dorothy Turick prepared a preliminary evaluation. Her work forms Volume I of a two volume final report. The second volume was prepared by Hardy Franklin and William Summers.

Franklin and Summers conclude that: NIC accomplished its basic purposes which were "...to provide information or referral assistance to people who may be in lower income brackets, poverty level, welfare assisted, and who may have little or limited education." They further state that the centers attracted new users to the libraries, and that the new users tended to limit their contract to the NIC, thus not utilizing other library services.[9]

In Dallas, efforts to the Public Library to respond to community information needs has taken the form of a Community Services Inventory. The information in the Inventory took approximately two years to compile and catalog. It was then published in a large notebook format. Bulky and complex, it received mixed reaction from the Dallas community. It was not geared for the common person. However, the information in the Inventory was invaluable.

The Library was then approached by the Dallas Chamber of Commerce concerning a joint venture. These preliminary discussions lead to the formation of an Informational Services Council sponsored by the Chamber and Library, and including representatives from radio station KLIF, Goals for Dallas, the City's Action Center, and the Community Council of Dallas. A nine month project was culminated with the publishing this past summer of "Open Dallas: A lot of information about Dallas you wished you had but couldn't find."

The paperback, which sells for $2.00, is for people. It is arranged in five major parts: People; Community--a Sense of Place; Problem Solving Kit; the Greening Edge; and Other Voices. Within each section the reader discovers a listing of agencies with names, addresses, and brief descriptive information, such as the do's and don'ts of each organization. The book concludes with a subject index, an alphabetical agency name index, and maps.[10] Community response to "Open Dallas" has been quite good. A second printing is now being planned.

The Library is also exploring with the City of Dallas' Data Services Department and the Dallas County Community College District, the possibilities of putting the data into a computer for on-line retrieval. Added to the present data could be other files such as an organization and club file, the list of local elected officials, appointed board/commission members, and selective demographic information. The cost for this phase is estimated to be approximately $30,000. The Dallas Public Library, unfortunately, did not assign costs as the data was being collected. Again, this illustrates a failure in effective cost accounting for budgeting.

On the West coast, at the Fort Vancouver Regional Library, Vancouver, Washington, the "People Index" is flourishing. The Index is a bringing together of human resources, by subject and personal expertise. As examples: If a Vancouver resident wants to know about geese, or the name of someone who speaks and writes Spanish, or how to diagnose a sick seaman, or assistance in planning programs, they may call or visit the Regional Library and use the Index. It consists of hundreds of 3"x5" cards arranged by subject, containing basic information re name, address, telephone number, specific skills, depths of skill, and availability. Keeping the Index current is very time consuming. The Library has volunteer assistance. You ask the question "Is it worth it?" Their response is "You bet!" Fort Vancouver feels they have the most "gung ho" program of any library in the region.

Turning now to a few non-library centers, there is the Citizens Information and Service Program, Dade County Florida. This program was initiated in the Spring, 1971. It is a joint effort of the United Fund and the Metropolitan County Government. The program was designed to provide a direct communication link between the residents of the county and their public and private social service agencies. It strives to increase the effectiveness of existing programs by cutting through bureaucratic red tape. The citizens advocacy services have been made available to all residents. Special emphasis

is placed on meeting the needs of people least able to attract attention through normal bureaucratic channels. Initial funding of the program came from a grant from the Social Security Administration, channeled through the Florida Division of Family Services.[12]

Since 1969 there has been an effort within the State of Wisconsin to develop and refine a method of providing information and referral services. The program has had two goals:

1. To improve connections between people who need human services and those that can help them.
2. To help provide for the planning of human services by investigating the usefulness of information available through information and referral centers.

A network of thirteen I&R centers, known as the Wisconsin Information Services (WIS), is operation. Each center services one or more counties. However, some counties are not covered. Centers have been initially staffed by a center manager and an I&R specialist who are jointly responsible for developing a resource file and delivering information and referral services. In the fall of 1973 seven of the centers began to provide additional services. Four centers will operate escort and follow through components; the other three will begin active, case finding outreach programs. These new services have upgraded the ability of each center, allowing them to link individuals with the best available facilities having the appropriate services.

Escort services will help those who find it difficult to physically move from center to center, as well as those who need moral support in making their initial contact. Follow through will provide a check to see if additional assistance is required beyond the I&R service. The outreach program will carry publicity about the center to people not usually reached by normal communications techniques.

Now in a demonostration phase, WIS, when completed, will result in the issuance of a series of manuals on the various components of the I&R network. The manuals should enable others to create and operate effective I&R services.[13]

In Santa Cruz, California we find Switchboard. It prides itself in being able to deal with any and all questions. Its chief data base is the resources of the staff members - based upon their personal experiences and knowledge. They rely on a limited number of printed resources. There is no reasonable request for service which they are too proud or too busy to attempt to fill. They do take pride in a feeling that they provide services which public libraries cannot or will not provide.

Switchboard feels that their strongest assets are concerned volunteers, a physical facility which serves as a means of communication with the community, the fact that they can call on the specialized services of a number of valuable people in the community, and their collection of community and self-generated reference tools. The volunteers are the backbone of the service. They have a strong need for community related information files with in-depth coverage appropriate to the demand from the community. In Santa Cruz this includes a fourteen drawer visible index containing approximately 1,300 subject cards with reasonably permanent information, a number of loose leaf books with ephemeral information (such as housing available), and a file of descriptive information in pamphlet form provided by agencies in the community to which the volunteers may wish to refer. All of this data is kept as up-to-date as the efforts of the volunteers can accomplish. There is an office resource coordinator to oversee matters and make sure that no important information area is neglected. An analysis of activity reveals that about 87% of the inquiries were answered with indexes and files produced and maintained by the staff.

Because of volunteer labor Switchboard costs about $4,000 a year, primarily for rent and telephones. The public library budget in the Santa Cruz area is over $650,000. The central library estimates that it answered approximately 33,000 reference questions. Switchboard answered approximately 27,000 questions. When an effort was made to bring the two institutions together, the library director was quoted as stating, "I don't see the logic of the library working with Switchboard."

Switchboard enthusiasts believe that communities are finding it more and more difficult to justify adequate funding for libraries. They believe that this could be turned about if libraries would adopt as our slogan "We try to help everyone."[14]

One of the most sophisticated information data bases is the International Information Service operating from the Information Center of the World Trade Center at the Port of New York. Interfile offers global information to a worldwide business community.

The service is an automated index to the information resources of hundreds of information sources in various parts of the world. More than 20,000 abstracts form the data base. In theory, Interfile is a space age catalog capable of accepting any kind of inquiry, and, in a few seconds, provide a precise list of the best information services in the world capable of replying to the question.

Interfile is implemented on a time sharing computer network which now encompasses all the United States, Canada, London, and much of Europe. Access to the file is made through world trade centers in these locals. If a library wishes to have access to this center it would have to negotiate a contract or an agreement with a world trade center and its city or state.

An order for a "package" of materials, including the descriptions of relevant publications, services, and other materials selected by the information center

staff would be on a fee basis not to exceed $10.00.[16]

Another Phildelphia and non-library project is the Model Cities Community Information Center which has a responsibility for supplying information traditionally supplied by social workers; information about community services, state or local laws, shopping information, and the like. The directory type information is stored in machine readable form for computer retrieval. The center ultimately expects to handle about 200 requests per day. At this time (about two years ago) the center was handling approximately 60 requests per day.

Gathering information for answering inquiries is very difficult. The Free Library of Philadelphia is assisting the Center in compiling this hard-to-acquire information.

Thirty percent of the inquiries are related to acquiring emergency food. Another ten-fifteen percent requests are for information on how to reapply to the state capitol for lost or stolen welfare checks. 80% of the calls have been generated by or come directly from welfare case workers.

The data base was initially developed by taking existing directories and designing a system around the printed data, updating it as needed when it was found to be incorrect. Thirty-three directories yielded 2,200 resources. Updating is every four months, as oppoed to every two years if the information were only available in a printed format.[15]

Similar to Interfile is the Technology Applications Center (TAC) based at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. TAC is an subsidiary of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Its data base consists of a multitude of computer accessible files. The services provided are primarily extensive literature searches and abstracts/bibliographies prepared upon request. There is a charge made for this service. Depending upon the length of the search, the charge will range from a few dollars to a few hundred dollars. Response time is generally seven to ten days, although extensive searches can take as long as three to four weeks.

The personnel in the operation are engineers skilled in literature searching on a variety of topics. Their emphasis is on the engineering and technology. However, there is an increasing number of social science files within the TAC data base.[17]

Another sophisticated service is FIND, an outlet of the Information Clearing House. FIND is sold on a subscription basis, primarily to businesses and related organizations. The key to the service is its ability to get answers faster and more economically than the subscribers own staff. The telephone is the principal delivery system. FIND is doing better than the staffs of some of America's largest corporations. Numbered among their clients are Lever Brothers, Phillip Morris, American Express, Bristol Meyers, General Telephone, and Chase Manhatten Bank. Non-profit organizations include the United Jewish Appeal.

The seeds of FIND go back some twenty-five years to a similar experience in Paris, which today is expanding its scope in conjuction with FIND and other affiliates. FIND is a low investment project, scaled to small operations, in which a lot of experimenting can be done with the unknowns until the groundwork can be laid for major expansion.

FIND now receives an average of forty questions a day, but on a peak day it can go as high as 80. There are no restrictions on the type of questions which may be asked. Queries have included the following:

- What was the barrellage of the top foreign breweries in the year 1972?
- Find out all the information available on the J.B. Lippincott Company, Canada, Ltd?
- How many justices on the California Supreme Court have children in, or have been in private schools?
- Find any articles or studies on educational toys on preschoolers.
- How can we contact Mrs. D.L. Moulton of the United States Navy Printing Office?
- What is the plural of Ms?[18]

Returning to the library profession, we find that the libraries in the Nassua New York Library System were experiencing an increased need to be better equiped for information and referral services. Many private social agencies in Nassua County which offer services were not/are not open on weekends. Many of them have only a single office and are not easily accessible in the community. The Library believes that it can overcome these problems since there are many more library agencies and their hours of public service are much greater than those of the traditional social agency.

Twenty-five member libraries of the System are now engaged in a community information and referral service program. Initiated in 1973 with twelve libraries, the program added thirteen more this past summer. The System had anticipated receiving an LSCA grant to fund this project. However, when it was not forthcoming the service need, as perceived by the librarians, was such that they went ahead without the grant money.

The libraries work very closely with the Nassua County Department of Health. This agency developed the initial resource data base for the project. The

emphasis of the data base is now on medically related information. They answer such questions as:

"How can I arrange for health services in the home?"

"How can we find a baby for adoption?"

"Does medical insurance cover the cost of eyeglasses?"

Staff includes a large compliment of volunteers under the supervision and direction of library staff in the participating libraries.

All costs for the project, including the I&R Coordinator appointed by each library, have been absorbed by the member libraries and the System headquarters. Exact costs for the project are not available.[19]

In 1972, utilizing LSCA funds, the Monroe County Library System, Rochester, New York, launched their Urban Information Center (UIC) project to explore the potential for library involvement in some aspect of human information services. The first ten months saw the development of a 5"x8" card file of 350 agencies with a subject index of 150 services placed in 35 libraries for field testing. From this test the library drew two major conclusions: one, there was a great need in the community for a comprehensive, up-to-date, reliable resource, and two, a card file was not a satisfactory format.

In August 1973, the MCLS Board of Trustees recommended to the County Legislature that UIC recieve local support for basic staff needs. This was approved by the politicians. Since that time it has functioned with three full time staff members; a librarian director, an assistant, and a clerk typist.

Beginning last November the major, and almost sole, effort of the project, has been directed toward the development of a computerized Human Services Director, first published in hard copy. The first update cycle has been completed and the second one started. Thirty-six member libraries have the directory. An additional 200 copies have been sold to community organizations.

Attention is now being turned to in-service training needs of the library staff members and to the promotion of the service to the public - a public which by and large still does not think to call the library for this kind of informational need.

The first year funding under LSCA was approximately $25,000. Current local funding for staff and administrative cost is $30,000 per year. A real cost figure of the directory has been difficult to compute. Project staff time, the time of a systems analyst, key punching, and multilith operators have been absorbed by the Monroe System. The cost for supplies, printing, postage, and computer time, all LSCA funded in 1974, was $6,075 for the library copies of the directory. Subscribers to the three volume directory are charged $27, which includes four updates a year. Primarily because of the supplies of the first update the subscriptions revenue will not cover the expenses of those sold, falling short by approximately $800.

The Directory is a comprehensive and current source of information. Included are those public, not-for-profit, and voluntary organizations which sponsor or operate a continuing program in the areas of health, education, welfare, housing, recreation, and legal services. 385 programs providing 150 different services are included. The information may be retrieved in three ways: service, agency name, and zip code.

Recently the project began publication of "The U I-Scene," a staff newsletter. The objectives of the newsletter are to stimulate staff interest in providing human services by featuring articles on agencies; communicate UIC activities and give staff an opportunity for input with comments, suggestions, problems which arise from using the Directory; inform staff of seasonally, reoccuring information needs; assist in providing service in the library by sharing the experience of the project staff; and share with staff how others are becoming involved in promoting and providing the services.[20]

The questions that we must ask ourselves is how much, or how little, can we or should we give to our clients? If the answer is everything, then we must be prepared to demonstrate to our management, policy makers, and budget setters that our information services are of real and tangable value, and that they can be accurately costed out. Furthermore, we must seriously consider the benefits of selling some - all - of our services![A] As we ponder these questions, let us review three additiona libraries information reports.

The Kansas State Library, utilizing LSCA Title I funds in the amount of $14,312, recently concluded an international survey of existing community information centers. The project director devoted full time to gathering information on existing information centers of various types. A paper was compiled which is serving as a guide for establishing community information centers in Kansas in areas of high concentration of disadvantaged residents.

The objectives of the Kansas project were to:

- Conduct a survey of the approaches taken by other communities in establishing CIC's.
- Identify basic formula groups or agencies in a community which should be contacted regarding the establishment of a CIC.
- Develop questionnaire formats for determining informational needs of the disadvantaged needs within the community.
- Establish alternative goals or functions which any community may choose.
- Establish cost estimates for implementation of the above alternatives singley and in various combinations.
- Make recommendation concerning specific target sites - one urban, one rural, for implementing CIC's in Kansas.

A. There are a few libraries which are now charging for "research on request" services. One of the pioneer public libraries in this endeavor is the Minneapolis Public Library's INFORM service. They charge $25 per hour for "a complete answer to the client's question in whatever format he prefers."[21]

Research was done through review of the literature on existing information and referral centers, and through correspondence and meetings with the directors of those and newer community information centers. The paper could serve as a very valuable planning tool for any community which may wish to establish or expand its work in this area. There are a great number of sample forms, questionnaires, and budgets within the paper. It has been furnished to a number of libraries in Kansas, including the administrators of the seven library systems in the state. At this time no centers have become operational. Several librarians have indicated that if funding were available they would possibly implement such a center.[22]

Turning our attention again to the Southwest, the Job Bank Service at the Bossier City (LA) Public Library was opened in April, 1973. It was initiated as outlined in an agreement between the Parish Library and the Louisiana State Employment Service. The Library began to display, for public use, the daily printout of the Job Bank Book for Northwest Louisiana. This printout lists all jobs available through the employment service as of 4:00 P.M. the previous day. Patrons may look through the printout for available jobs. If a user finds a job which is of interest an introductory card is filled out noting the "dot" number. The user may then inquire at the State employment office in Shreveport.

The printout is displayed in the Library Conference Room. It is divided by type of jobs. Because of the lack of staff time patrons are not assisted in using the service unless they specifically request help.[23]

The Wake Information Center, a county-wide telephone and walk-in reference service providing social, educational, health, and recreational services information has been established by the Wake County Public Library, North Carolina. Primary informational tools include a directory/subject oriented handbook. Preparation of this handbook, a "man on the street directory,"

was financed in part with grants from the Health Affairs Roundtable, Urban Affairs Community Services, and the Library. The directory is available in each of the sixteen libraries in the county. [24]

What does this review say to libraries, librarians, and local government officials?

1. It would appear that there is a need for community information services, especially in metropolitan areas.
2. There is a willingness on the part of many local libraries to move into this arena with local funds.
3. Staff training and orientation is an absolute key to success.
4. Not every librarian is capable of, or should even be considered, providing such service.
5. There should be no great problem with utilizing paraprofessionals ("community people") to staff the centers.
6. While the focus todate has been on serving low income communities the need is probably as great (albeit different) in middle income neighborhoods.
7. The collection of the right data is also a key to success.
8. A great deal of the needed data is not available in printed formats and thus must be hunted, scrounged, begged, borrowed; whatever it takes to get it for the data base.
9. Printed directories are of temporary, limited value.
10. Index files are better than books.
11. Most of the data appears to be conducive to computer storage and on-line retrieval.
12. Serious consideration should also be given to "selling" our specialized community services.
13. Serious consideration should be given to buying information from "commercial" data banks.

14. In far too many situations librarians have not developed true figures on the real costs of the service being provided.

Where should libraries draw the line on the type of service provided? The information that we have at hand now is too scattered to draw any firm conclusions. However, from a reading of the literature and the correspondence it appears to this librarian that the line should be drawn between dispensing information from a data bank (directory, file, computer) to a person who has walked in/telephones requesting information/assistance, and delivering the service to the patron. In other words, it is a legitimate and necessary library service to provide information for an individual or a group who wishes/needs to know about drug clinics, job opportunities, abortion. It is not, I contend, the place of the library to transport citizens to clinics, to assist them in finding a job by making telephone calls or writing letters for them. There are other agencies and other professions who are better equiped better trained, more skilled, in providing this type of service.

As we accelerate the providing of this type of service let us not continue to make the mistakes of the past in budgeting and cost accounting. For too many years we have gone before our boards, councils, and commissions with hands out and little justification re the true cost of our services. We can do a better job. If we do, our chances for funding increases will rise.

1. Mc Dowell, Faith. Letters dated March 14, 1974, and September 26, 1974.

2. Duchac, Kenneth. Memorandum to the staff dated March 16, 1973.

3. Franklin, Hardy R. and Summers, F. Williams. Evaluative Study of the Neighborhood Information Center Project: A Report to the Cleveland Public Library. Vol. II. May 1974, pp. 1-2.

4. Turick, Dorothy. "Neighborhood Into Centers: Some Answers, New Questions." Library Journal, 98:3596, December 15, 1973.

5. Byam, Milton S. A Project to Estiablish and Implement Two Neighborhood Information Centers in the Borough of Queens, New York City, Annual Report. June 30, 1974.

6. Croneberger, Robert B. Letter dated September 10, 1974.

7. Henington, David M. Letter dated September 17, 1974.

8. Graves, Catharine. Letter dated October 3, 1974

9. Franklin and Summers, op.cit., p.65

10. Open Dallas. Margaret Warren, ed. Dallas, Information Services Council (Sponsored by Dallas Chamber of Commerce and the Dallas Public Library), August 1974, 157pp.

11. Jolliver, Berenice. "Fort Vancouver Regional Library Strikes Gold with a 'People Index'." Library News Bulletin, 40:24-27, January-March 1973.

12. Glaiber, Mark. "Citizens Information and Service Program." RQ, 12:359-360, Summer, 1973.

13. Long, Nicholas. "Wisconsin Information Service: An I&R Network." RQ, 12:356-359, Summer, 1973.

14. McShean, Gordon. "Switchboard...a threat to libraries?" California Librarian, 34:47-59, January 1973.

15. Schultz, Claire K., ed. "Information Needs of Poor Neighborhoods." Drexel Library Quarterly, 8:89-97, January 1972.

16. Kearney, Thomas J. Letter dated February 25, 1974.

17. TAC. "What is TAC." Albuquerque, The University of New Mexico, n.d., 25pp.

18. Doebler, Paul. "Seek And Ye Shall FIND." Publishers Weekly, 202:39-42, October 16, 1972.

19. Javelin, Muriel C. Letter dated September 19, 1974

20. Bovay, Sue. Letter dated September 16, 1974.

21. Huttner, Marian A. "INFORM Expands Basic Library Service." The Tattler, 1:2, October 1974.

22. Gonzalez, Mary Quiroz. A Project Providing Information Which is Intended To Be Used As A Guide In The Establishing Of One Or More Community Information Centers In Rural Or Urban Areas Evidencing High Concentrations Of Disadvantaged Residents. March 1973, 108pp.

23. Netherland, Lynda M. Letter dated July 2, 1974.

24. "North Carolina Library Launches Information Center." Library Journal, 98:822, March 15, 1973.